

Victoria Street Newz

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we print"*

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Then, and Now, and Then

by Rose Henry



My native family has survived through generations of poverty and hardship. Unfortunately, the future doesn't look much brighter for our blood lineage. The blood that will be passed from one generation to the next will contain preservatives and artificial things like canned fish that was not preserved by my family, but by a stranger's machine.

I fear that water will no longer flow from a river or a creek but only from a tap where additives will be added to preserve its freshness, and it will come in bottles where we will pay more for it than we pay for gas. Gone will be the memories of eating fresh untainted vegetables and meat products.

Water is considered sacred because it represents the beginning of all life. We already can no longer drink water straight from the stream. The last water conference I was at had one First Nations Person there that works in the water department for his community. He told me that 65 reserves are without adequate drinking water and have been for a number of years. One reserve has been under a boiled water restriction for over ten years.

The kids that I am currently taking care of are now drinking sugared water in bottles because their mom said they need to drink more water and the water they had been drinking in the past is contaminated.

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About Street Newz

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Victoria Street Newz welcomes written submissions including personal stories, interviews, event reviews, cartoons, poetry, photographs, or artwork, but we can't guarantee everything will be published. We reserve the right to edit, and will not print anything libelous, racist, sexist, or homophobic. Letters sent to the editor are assumed to be for publication, must include phone number or email (if possible, for confirmation) and may be edited for length. You can publish using a pseudonym, or anonymously.

We are devoted to a triple bottom line philosophy - concerned about our environmental and social, as well as financial, well-being.

You can contribute to social change by supporting the *Victoria Street Newz* team, by pondering the root causes of poverty, and by working for peaceful, non-violent change.

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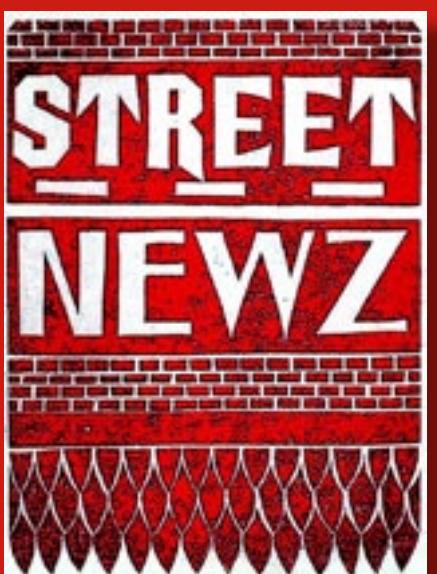


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just another rant

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Something incredible is happening in our world. But if you don't have access to alternative and independent media sources via the internet, or if you haven't looked for it, you likely have no idea how profound this summer of revolution truly is. We're in the midst of a peoples' uprising the likes of which this world has never seen.

You might have heard about the masses of people who took to the streets earlier this year in Egypt, forcing a dictator off his throne. Many tens of thousands of people also took to the streets throughout Tunisia, Bahrain, Yemen, Syria, Libya, and even Palestine. In May the spirit of revolution found voice in Europe, where half a million people turned out in Athens' Syntagma square in early June, following the "Yes We Camp" established in Madrid's Puerta del Sol square on May 15th. In solidarity, people have taken to the streets in France, Belgium, Holland, Austria, Germany, and Great Britain. Lots of people. Hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people. Folks on the ground, citizen journalists, are creating community pages (ie search "Spanish Revolution" in Facebook) where friends can post photos and videos, or repost articles of interest, or express ideas about how the world might function differently, or write with solidarity and support. Electronic newspapers with headlines and links to videos, photos, and articles are circulating via Twitter (ie search #arabrevolution in Twitter). Some days the revolution is livestreaming on the internet.

In the US, the good people of Wisconsin occupied their capitol building for many days and nights to protest Governor Scott Walker's outrageous attempts to denounce any collective bargaining options for the state's unions. In mid June Mike Elk reported that "Now, thousands are protesting Governor's Walker drastic cuts to the social safety net and workers' rights, contained in his 2011-2013 budgets" and that over 100 days of creative civil disobedience have included establishing a tent city called "Walkerville" on the lawn of the Capitol. They forced a bank to close for a day, and have drawn up lists of banks that don't pay taxes so they can resist those banks' attempts to foreclose on their neighbours' homes. There are recall elections planned, discussions about how systems and structures can be re-organized to be more inclusive and effective, and union representatives are re-examining the ways they function internally.¹

All around the world people are creating community, participating in



general assemblies, thinking, talking, strategizing, building consensus, voting, and establishing a foundation for a new world order that is monumentally different from the corporate regime they are rebelling against. And this, I believe, is why you won't find much (if any) corporate media coverage, nevermind comprehensive analysis, of the revolution. The corporate and state media just aren't designed to inspire revolution. They don't hire people with histories of grassroots organizing or radical activism (by radical I refer to the literal meaning of the word ... "relating to the root of something").

In contrast most, if not all, independent media producers, consider themselves a part of the movement. We do our jobs because they don't do theirs. We understand how difficult it is to get people into the streets, how significantly important their concerns must be for them to leave their comfortable homes and sleep on cardboard in the city square. We know why they're so concerned about their future, and we understand what happens in those new communities – the sharing of food and resources, the camaraderie, the philosophical discussions, the challenges of realizing a common basis of unity while dealing with typically human things like egos and emotions and discomfort.

We know that the many hundreds of thousands, millions, of people who are practicing creative, non-violent civil disobedience around our world may not agree precisely on how to construct a better world, but I think they do all agree that the greed and corruption fueling the current world order is decidedly NOT leading to a sustainable future. Whatever we do next, however we collectively decide to re-construct the social institutions that help our communities survive, we will take a lesson from history and do it differently. We will be the change we wish to live with.

This is no easy task, this doing it differently. We're all victims of imperialism. We've all experienced its violence directly, or we've been indoctrinated with the belief that it's a viable solution. Our challenge is to heal the scars, individually and collectively, to un-learn the racism and classism and ageism that imperialist thought encourages, to catch ourselves when we impose ourselves inappropriately, or fall into old patterns of hierarchy or the fear that poverty and scarcity creates. We have the tools to learn about this massive global revolution, to participate by sharing our thoughts and opinions with people all over the world, to change the way we collectively live on this beautiful planet.

On June 3rd Brigette DePape lost her job as a page with Canada's federal government after holding up a sign that read "Stop Harper" (see page 5). Will this simple act become Canada's rallying point for change? I believe it will. And I thank her for her courage.

Photo: Anonymous source, Brigette and the Raging Grannies, June 2011.

¹ www.inthesetimes.com/working/entry/11466/the_real_story_happening_in_wisconsin_media_isnt_covering

send us your thoughts – StreetNewz@islandnet.com, or drop off your writings at 1027 Pandora Avenue.

Letters

Reflecting on Kay Dixon and theocracy

Kay Dixon was one of the two female members of Victoria's first Humanist society, the other its president Marian Sherman. This group urged tolerance and urged pragmatic support for all people because we should, not because we are afraid of a God's fury. Kay, in particular, waged a personal war against poverty. Once responsible for Victoria's playgrounds and parks, as the years passed she became an irascible champion of the poor.

People like Kay would never use science or technology to do harm. Finding a cure for TB or developing a new weapon is a choice we make, not the technology itself and Kay's message should be read as using all our know how and empathy to help one another. The writer is of course right--we do have to encourage empathic approaches to problems and I'm sure Kay would agree with me if she was not now giving heaven a really hard time.

Andy Mulcahy, Victoria

We Need to Talk About Food Security

The Slave Lake fire devastation could easily be Port Alberni. One highway and so on...

Duncan McDonald in Alberta is calling it "a once in a lifetime fire" on CTV right now. What utter nonsense, this is climate change. Why won't he say it?

Our community is in denial and not enough action is taking place at the pace required.

Weather is changing so fast we need to grow food whenever and wherever we can. Using permaculture and biochar we can increase production and lessen the labour intensity.

There are a lot of volunteers in Alberni but many are distracted from reality, and some are proceeding, business as usual. People need to drop what they are doing and start growing food in an organized, cooperative and devoted manner. They need to incorporate what they are doing now into the farmer lifestyle. Plant potatoes NOW if you have access to water. If not, spelt and quinoa.

Those unable to farm for real physical reasons can be the advocates and activists who never let up on pressuring governments and media. I hold all our governments responsible and all elected representatives. The government of Canada has spending taxpayer dollars on this GHG problem since the mid 1990s. But they're fossil fuel dependent.

If humanity survives climate change and peak oil, the act of denying science for profit will become a major political target in the Next World.

Focus on the state of our credit rating, as individuals and nations, has overtaken the much more important focus of, on whom we depend for everything, Mother Earth. What are the banks up to in this? Where is their commitment to the survival of the human race?

It's not only time for debt forgiveness, across the board, but time for a whole new way of calculating values.

Jen Bradley, Port Alberni

..... *continued from cover*

A number of reserves bring in bottled water.

I remember one year we did a press conference from Brentwood Bay. The corporate media arrived and were deeply disturbed because they had to run their generators several meters away because the conference was being held in the warmest spot on the reserve. The reserve had been without electricity for ten days that time.

Unless things begin to change, soon, this is the legacy my grand children and great grandchildren will have. They will learn about life through electronic gadgets, not from me or my child, they will learn how to get food from the store and dumpsters rather than the garden, they will learn that electricity comes from a switch on the wall and that fish comes from a can and not the ocean. The ocean, which once was the symbol of life, is now null and void because we use it a toilet and not as a giver of life. We will not be able to remember any stories that are positive or even just remember ... because we now know that artificial stuff is damaging our memories.

My parents and their parents' memories consist of surviving the government's legalized residential school kidnapping system, where literally everything relating to our culture was beaten out of them. So they no longer spoke our traditional language, danced our ceremonial dances, cooked our traditional foods, gave us children our traditional names or celebrated our special achievements. My great grandparents' life was about saving their children from the foreigners, preserving the land, and enjoying the fruits of their labour of love for all life while trying to understand the newcomers to the land. For my great great grand parents it was about ensuring the survival of all life through the season when the food was not so plentiful, and about loving and respecting the newcomers to the land that gave so much.

Now that access to our traditional lands are gone and the resources are extinct along with some of our languages, food, and children, our survival rate would be added to the endangered species list if we were birds or a four legged animal but we are not considered endangered because we look and breath and breed just like those who oppress us. Some of our desires maybe the same, our basic needs are the same, our values may be the same, but our cultures are definitely different. We still value life, we love and accept people and have a deeper understanding of what is living and what living is all about. But the price we have to pay for loving and respecting life is that we suffer at the hands of the visitors.

A lot of my indigenous brothers and sisters are incarcerated in Canada's jails. We have a high percentage of successful teenage suicides, very few native students graduate from high school. We have limited access to land where we could hunt and fish and feed our families. Our children are rarely taught the traditional ways of family and community, but instead are often taught by strangers from different cultures with different values. When children miss school the teacher sends their names to the principal, who sends a report to the Ministry of Child and Family Services, who then arrive at the child's home and take the children away.

Our poverty rates are high, and we live well below Canada's poverty line. Some, who make it to adulthood, try and get back to school since it's often later in life that we understand the importance of a good education. This is something I have tried to teach my own child as well as my nieces and nephews. A good education and health will help us survive through the poverty that has been imposed on us.

But it is hard for people like me to continue to carry this message and make the next generation believe this when the colonizers' government are the real Indian givers. They have stolen our land and our way of living and told us to live just like them. They promise to care for us by providing us with more funding for our education, housing, health care and land base. Instead, the colonizers neglect First Nations and gave them sub standard drinking water, food, shelter and clothing. Then when we did not go away they forced their way of life on us, instead of learning from us. They took the children and reinforced their way of life on them. No government has ever cleaned up toxic lands that First Nations have been forced to live on, any meetings with government that I have attended on residential lands have had the water, coffee, and food brought in.

This land was once ours and we shared it. Then the visitors laid claim to everything. What they shared back were the tainted blankets which killed most of my elders. They forced our fathers to enlist in the army if they wanted us to survive, they stole our right to live as our ancestors had taught us, shot us if we shared, and exploited us for their sexual pleasures, exploited our land for their benefits. I am sure that one of the worse things that they ever did was to educate us through their forced assimilation. They did not terminate all of us because they needed our knowledge of the land and how to survive and work with it. We were the first environmentalists.

From the colonizer's perspective, one of the worse things they did was to educate Native Indians who then realized their rights, and demanded to be treated as equals. We did not

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want to become the thieves that they are, nor did we want to learn this part but we were forced to learn this to continue to preserve and honor our mother called earth. We had to learn to do this by using their tools that they used on us so that we can survive.

So, I choose not to own a credit card because I prefer cash. I do not pay my taxes because I possess a little card that says that I, as a status Indian, do not have to. My credit is lousy because I never applied for a credit card when I was young and employed at a steady job with a steady income. I am a Native Indian with no possessions or land that the banking institutions recognize as my own. I am homeless in my own homeland. My poverty intensifies, as did my parents', as will my child's, because they will inherit the legacy of poverty instead of a legacy of legends rich with cultural history. My child will suffer the same fate as I have, not because of having no education, but because they are Indian. This new generation has some college and university schooling but the jobs and the affordable housing simply aren't available. This generation does not have the experience of living on reservation, nor will they see first hand the signs of beatings that their grandparents endured at the hands of religions or hospitals, but they will suffer because of being an Indian with no cultural home.

I am an Indian with no insurance or reassurance that I will survive the next human made disaster because my income does not allow me to carry extra luxuries like life insurance or tenancy insurance. This past winter my power was cut off because I refused to pay the hydro bill when the caretaker told me that all I needed to do was leave on the electric heat lamp to dry out my bathroom. The bathroom that continuously gets flooded on a less frequently routine basis now, but still does even though the new property

manager and residential caretaker have spent more than \$5,000.00 in repairs. I had to endure multiple flooding coming from the roof, mold growing through our walls that caused my face to breakout in a really bad rash that I am still dealing with weeks later. I lived without access to my own toilet, washbasin and proper flooring for several weeks while it was snowing outside. I was never offered an alternative place to live while my place was being renovated, nor could I afford to rent another place because one of the two jobs I acquired was only temporary and the other is an on-call one.

As for my partner they get a wage increase and their hours are reduced immediately so that their income was actually less in the long run.

There is a little bit of a positive side to this part of my life. The new building manager agrees with me about the hydro bill after he saw firsthand the damage done to my unit by another neighbour. And he understands, through various other neighbours, that we are good tenants who have been suffering with this problem for over a year and we've done our best to cope with the damage. The new manager paid to get the hydro reconnected and put our unit at the top of the list to be repaired.

My partner and I were offered a small contract to clean the other units in our building. The resident caretaker likes the job we have been doing ... rather, the my partner has been doing because my body can no longer tolerate the toxic cleaning chemicals being used in the building.

And I am preparing to attend the International Network of Street Newspaper Conference in Glasgow later in July. Thanks to all who are supporting me and *Street Newz*.

This, to us, is a small part of reclaiming our power and contributing to our community.

Rose Henry was born in what's known as Bremerton Washington, taken from her parents in Powell River, and then raised by a white middle income family in Coast Salish lands. For decades she has worked, independently, to promote the human rights all of our sisters and brothers.

Photos from the Spanish Revolution - cover - "I also want a worthy future," David Flores Torrecillas, www.lacamararoja.com, 2011; -- left -- "Youth without a future, homeless, jobless," at Madrid's Puerta del Sol 2011, REUTERS/Andrea Comas.



..... *continued from cover*



ask hothead

So, here's the unpublished letter I sent to the editor of Monday Magazine to clarify their misquotes from the story titled "The Market and the Chicken" April 13 2011:

Thanks to Monday Magazine for running the story about how a civil rights/poverty activist gets barred for life for speaking out after witnessing some of what you saw in the photo of the "take down." I would, however, like to clarify that, when I arrived at the scene (Market on Yates), I could not hear the man nor see him well at all to check to ensure if he was being held in a safe manner. I've had experience working within a detox. After taking a couple of pictures I let the man know I was there and paying attention. What I was saying to the staff was stuff like "this sure looks intense, shame on you guys, I don't know what happened but, this seems overkill..." The manager made me get off the chair at his tables (when I sat down to rest), then told me, "we did what we did to avoid violence." He said this all "pumped up" within two feet of my person. I said it looked pretty embarrassing for them to be holding down one person in such a fashion, shame. He said I was "barred for life from the market because I was verbally aggressive to his staff." I then asked my witness if she had heard that, she nodded yes, I then turned to this manager fellow and said, "friend, I have not shopped without duress at your market since they similarly "took down" a woman for a couple of chicken parts." He went red in the face said "and we'd do it again." That is when I said "now that is shameful." Remember folks, it's due to this current federal and provincial government and that we are under such a security culture that seems to think it is ok to attack the most vulnerable. I also told Monday Magazine that I felt I was being told I am guilty by association. Maybe some of these folks I have known over the last two years have felt desperate enough to steal; I would never judge them with such anger nor attack them. It is capitalism that creates thieves.

Some folks seem to think it's OK to protect one's business in this fashion! We must all have this conversation, many want to Boycott the Market till they change their policy and apologize to me. Others have decided to write a letter to the Market and let them and other businesses know alternatives to protecting "their goods." Some folks have stated they will write the Market letters explaining how they are going to cut back shopping and go out of their way to other fine Grocers and show solidarity with us who are facing HUGE stigma right now in Victoria. Folks can and must demand that Governments build homes and stop creating poverty thru this economic system. We do not have to live this way! We do have to speak up, whether we shop there or not, that is what solidarity is all about. Be a part of the solution, stop supporting bullies and aggression thru silence.

Personally, Source Security got me their feedback re: the "internal investigation" of the Security Guard who harassed me on a street corner at Pandora and Yates, I asked for an apology. Victoria City Councillor Philippe Lucas said it well when he read their letter and responded to Source: "With all due respect, this letter is not an apology, and shouldn't have been described as such to either me or Mr. Hines. While you state that it's 'regretful' that Mr. Hines was treated unprofessionally, Source falls short of actually apologising for this incident...."

Source did however state, "We have determined that the staff acted in a manner that is not in accordance to our policies and not in the best interest of our client." Kris Jamieson Operations Manager.

I have begun the process of a complaint with the Solicitor General, I await their call. In the meantime, I have changed pharmacies and prefer to do my business elsewhere. I travel with others in the area till it's all straightened out. I will be announcing when I go out to sit on the public bench by the Market and do leafletting and general education of this cause, keep your ears and eyes peeled, we will bring guitars and coffee and the Monday Magazine article in Poster form to educate and protest stigma.

Update regarding Mustard Seed. I have been advised to consider a Human Rights Complaint against Mustard Seed for discriminating against co-parenting families, placing undue stress on parents to always have each of their children's health care cards with them at every visit, or you do not get served as a family on that day. One used to be able to bring a photo copy and the actual card once or twice a year. "Not any more" says the GOVERNMENT and, the Mustard Seed is stating their "hands are tied, new regulations." What country am I living in? Is this not supposed to be a "free" and "democratic" society that takes care of everyone? Guess not, Conservatives like Harper seem to be hellbent on attacking our freedoms! What oh what should we, I, you or me do? Pray Tell! Shall we have regular protests against Stigma starting at the Market on Yates dealing with security culture gone out of control and the diverse sides of "Capitalism," then, march down to the Mustard Seed and show the diverse sides of "Charity" and how it can be so beautiful to share and, so demeaning to be judged? If you want to join this, come and talk to me, a group complaint is far more powerful and can stop this Government Attack, if the Mustard Seed will not stand up to the Government, then we must stand up to both.

Hothead wants to hear from you: I spoke with a new friend regarding how, besides the food being great and having a bed, the Our Place Housing is not a home, one cannot have visitors, make a meal or make coffee. Any feedback folks?

kym hothead is a visitor on Lekwungen Territory, from Winnipeg Red River Cree Territory where Mom was an Acadian (Bourque) and Dad was a Métis (Gladue). You can send thoughts and comments to kym by writing to streetnewz@islandnet.com.



a Michael Blackstock cartoon - humanx.org/atthecorner.htm

Community Social Planning Council eNewsletter excerpts

In this, the 75th anniversary year of the Council we are bringing you quarterly updates on important news and issues that affect the social sustainability of our region and our communities. We'll be focusing on key socio-economic trends, news on groundbreaking initiatives to tackle poverty and social issues, and feature reports that provide insights into the state of our communities. As this is a landmark year for the Council's work to support communities creating their own futures, we'll also bring you information on key anniversary events that you can participate in to help guide the Council's future work. We welcome your comments on how to make the newsletter a dynamic focus for engagement on social issues in our region. Contact us at info@communitycouncil.ca.

Key Findings - BC Community Services Research

British Columbians believe the current level of funding for community social services is too low. Almost two in three respondents (65%) stated that the level of funding is too low.

- * Only 7% believe the current level of funding is too high
- * Three out of four respondents (75%) believe that in tough times, government cuts to these services hurt people now and into the future, where missed opportunities for prevention end up as costly crisis interventions
- * Only 15% believe that in tough times, government should reduce its deficit by doing things like cutting community social services.
- * Most respondents believe they would either have a short wait (two-in-five) or a long wait (almost half) for service, if they or a member of their family needed support. More than one in twenty (7%) do not think they would get the service at all.
- * 87% agreed with the following statement: Community social services like mental health services, support for seniors, and drug and alcohol counselling make our communities safer and better places to live. My community will be less safe and orderly without those services.
- * That same percentage (87%) agreed that it is smarter and more economical to tackle social problems early, and that spending on community social services now results in spending less in the future on policing, jails and hospital care.
- * 85% of British Columbia residents consider community social services to be important.

Polling details - Conducted in British Columbia on Aug. 24-25, 2010, by Angus Reid Public Opinion and NOW Communications on behalf of the Provincial Roundtable. 804 adults responded. Margin of error: plus or minus 3.5 per cent, 19 times out of 20.

Poverty Reduction and Prevention

The Community Social Planning Council's Executive Director, Rupert Downing, presented to the Finance Standing Committee of the BC Legislature on the need for provincial and regional action on poverty. In the seven page brief the case was made for a provincial action plan on poverty reduction and prevention involving a horizontal "across-government" and "across-agency" approach that is evidence based and strategic to key vulnerabilities and populations at risk of falling into poverty and/or facing barriers to climbing out of poverty¹.

Some of the key trends and issues for affordability in the Capital Region include:

- * More than one in four families with two children (27.2%) earn an income that is less than required to sustain an adequate quality of life.
- * The hourly wage required for two parents working full time to sustain a family with two children is now \$17.31. This has increased by 10.75% in five years, particularly because of the rising cost of rental housing.
- * Nearly half (43.8%) of tenants of market housing are paying 30% or more of their income on housing costs.
- * The bottom half (poorest) households have only 21.4 % of household income, indicating rising inequality within the region and between communities.

¹ www.communitycouncil.ca/pdf/2010-10-Presentation-BC-Select-Standing-Ctte.pdf

Left Right, Left Right

by Brian Mason

In mid-2004, Stephen Harper was a small but growing dot on the Canadian political horizon. In March of that year, he won the leadership of the new Conservative party, an amalgam of the Canadian Alliance (itself a diminished, shambolic leftover from the Reform days, led by Harper) and Progressive Conservative parties. He won decisively on the first ballot, defeating Belinda Stronach (remember her?) and Tony Clement (still around). Seven years later, Harper rules as Prime Minister, this time with a convincing majority after leading minority governments since January, 2006. By any measure, his ascent and staying power have been impressive.

For those who say – and who blame it on our first-past-the-post electoral system – that Harper didn’t “win” anything because his party got just under 40 per cent of the votes cast, I say Back off. He won! decisively, clearly, and can feel smug with a comfortable majority. Complaining about the rules is for losers.

Harper is Canada’s Bush, the younger. Unlike Bush, who relied on Karl Rove (and others) for a brain, Harper, unfortunately, has his own grey cells. Which makes him more devious, calculating – and more dangerous. He excels at political strategy and day-to-day infighting tactics. Campaigning and winning elections are his strengths. His cold, steely-blue eyes will be watching over us for a long time, it would appear.

“Political campaigning is a civilized form of civil war,” writes one of Harper’s former top advisors, the University of Calgary libertarian political scientist Thomas Flanagan. “The point,” argues Flanagan, “is to win the war, not to complain that people are fighting. Leave the whining to the utopians who fantasize about conflict-free societies.” Fighting words, indeed. And the Conservatives have certainly shown us how to fight, fight dirty – and how to win.

Cut to situation scan, 2011: Capitalism still on top but shaky. Environment trashed. Fish stocks depleted. Too much rain. Too little rain. Seven billion humans and counting. Wars/invasions/no-fly zones/car bombings/suicide bombers proliferating. Excited States bankrupt and sinking. China, a totalitarian state, rising towards world dominance. And how many nuclear warheads are still out there, untended and rusting in unknown silos? Immigration tensions rising in the European Union. North Africa and the Middle East in revolt. Nuclear power plants blowing up/leaking/letting off steam. Pipelines breaking. Apathy. Leadership vacuums. Indecision. Procrastination. Fear. Overwhelming natural disasters. Civilizations clashing. UN foundering. Just for starters....

Back to Harper: He won by uniting the right, staying on message, projecting an image of moderation – and old fashion stick-to-it-iveness. He knew where he wanted to go and figured out, by trial and error, how to get there. The Left (for lack of a better word; or is Progressives better, perhaps Greens?) can learn how to win from the Harper Conservatives. Forget about: social networking, street protests, guerilla gardening, civil disobedience, voting for the Greens, wearing orange, going vegan, volunteering at an ENGO, taking shorter showers, buying a Prius, eating wild salmon, and all the other notional nods towards the moral high ground of a possible better world. The only way to change the rules of the game is to take over the game by using the rules of the game. Grab those levers of power – without scaring off any voters on the way to the top.

But face it, Lefts/Progressives/Greens (LPGs) are so fractured, so mired in micro-causes like saving a neighbourhood stream or green space, that it wouldn’t be conspiracy theory to believe Harper is behind it all, frothing things up. Commentators as far apart as the *Globe and Mail*’s Margaret Wente and *the Guardians*’ George Monbiot have recognized the problem. Writes the latter, “All of us in the environment movement ... are lost. None of us yet has a convincing account of how humanity can get out of this mess.” Harper, meanwhile, got to where he wanted to be, laughing all the way to POWER, while gleefully yanking whatever federal funding still remains for environment/social justice groups.

Canada, don’t you see, is missing revolution and radical-change genes. We’re nice people, with a queen. Harper knows this and, despite being an extreme Christian and right-winger, was smart enough to play the cards of moderation and incremental change. Now he’s got his conservative hands on all the levers. Jack Layton, poor fellow, will be spending most of the next five years trying to snuff out the in-fighting amongst his NEW BIG caucus and figuring out how to keep all those unknown, newly-minted MPs away from the headlines and Twitter. It won’t be easy; it’ll be ugly: the Left is devoted to self-immolation.

LPGs regard POWER as a soiling experience. For them, the great transformation will be greatly diminished if it merely involves taking over the levers from the other guy (and they are mostly all guys). Power corrupts, as Poli Sci 101 instructs. Hierarchies are for the other side – and LPGs long to do things differently. Diffuse power among the people. Let them yoga their way to the top/bottom/altruism/equality of a beneficent new world order, all overseen by the World Social Forum.

Go on, disparage government and political parties and nations and capitalism and POWER all you want. Unleash a smorgasbord of shame, a rainbow of rants! Bring it all down. Except you can’t, and you won’t. Too few are with you. Leaps of faith are for that other domain.



Harper's New Prisons Are For Us

by Betty Krawczyk

Yes, Harper's New Prisons are for us.

Else why would Harper be building so many? Especially when statistics show that violent crimes have actually gone down in Canada? I believe Harper's big investments in prisons (up to ten new prisons, expanding old ones; billions of dollars) are to allay his worst fears of the Canadian people. Fears? Yes, in my opinion, I think that Harper fears public reaction to his future economic plans and that the prisons will be primarily to accommodate a wave of public protest against the joblessness and final cuts in social programs. And Harper's uncompromising political agenda is buttressed by his religious ones.

Stephen Harper is a fundamentalist evangelical Christian of the Dispensationalist variety, that is, one who holds a literal belief in the Bible, particularly the Book of Revelations. This book describes the Armageddon, a name given to the events prophesied to occur when the earth's people will be in total chaos and Jesus will return and create the “Rapture” for believers. And non-believers? Well, they get to perish in a river of fire. And I believe that Stephen Harper's brothers in faith, Stockwell Day and Chuck Strahl (and supported by Jimmy Pattison who is rumored to be the richest man in BC) are returning to British Columbia to prepare for the Second Coming.

It can be argued that Mr. Strahl's return to BC is connected with his asbestos related cancer, but this did not diminish his enthusiasm for Canadian asbestos mines and the perceived need to export it to poor third world countries whose people, in turn, will sicken and die from asbestos. I think this a rather peculiar, uncaring position to take, and until his decision to return to BC with Stockwell Day, Mr. Strahl insisted that he would run again. In my opinion, Harper called an election (by refusing input of the other parties) because he foresees another Armageddon, a financial one this time, perhaps to proceed his expectation of the Biblical one, after his re-election.

The financial Armageddon has to do with the high Canadian dollar. As of today (April 4th) the Canadian dollar is worth one dollar and three cents US (and climbing). But that's good, right? To have a strong Canadian dollar? Yes, if we're shopping in the US, but no, if our jobs and very livelihoods depend on exports. As everyone knows we Canadians live primarily by exporting our natural resources...wood, water, oil, and minerals. But when the Canadian dollar is so high then our exports are not as competitive in the world market and then many of our commodities just sit, waiting for the market to change. The market seems loath to change at the moment but it must be made to do so fairly soon or Canada will go broke. How to make our dollar go down?

Two ways...the Bank of Canada (or in reality our domestic banks) can print more money which would gradually devalue our dollar until it gets pushed down below par with the US. However, this would cause hyper-inflation. Or there could be some sort of readjustment at the Bank of Canada that would be the equivalent of an immediate devaluation. And that would be that. No more great American shopping and anything imported would cost lots more. However, some jobs might pick up immediately as more commodities would be shipped out. But, as always, the CEOs and stock holders of our great international resource sucking corporations will take the money and run.

And the Stephen Harper, Stockwell Day, Chuck Strahl, Jimmy Pattison fundamentalist brand of religion will flourish in British Columbia. The condition of the majority of us will resemble the condition of First Nations on contact...the exploiters take the land and resources and give us the Bible. Particularly the Book of Revelation. And if we vehemently object then yes, Harper's new and expanded prisons will be waiting.



While imprisoned for Contempt of Court in the spring of 2003, Betty Krawczyk searched for understanding into the reasons for her actions. Had she signed a paper promising not to go back to the Walbran Valley where she was arrested for blockading logging trucks with her group, Women in the Woods, she would have been released from prison until trial. But she refused.

Betty's latest book, *This Dangerous Place: My Journey Between the Passions of the Living and the Dead* (Friesen Press, 2011), poses these questions: What is the source of the human will? And an even more elusive question: to what degree can humans interact with the dead? Do the passions of people long dead still hang around in certain situations and seek to interfere with the lives of the living? This book asks these questions from lived experience. The answers may belong to the future. *This Dangerous Place* can be purchased from friesenpress.com/bookstore, amazon.ca, barnesandnoble.com, or schiverrhodespublishing.com. Contact Betty at betty.krawczyk@gmail.com.

**Books for Reading:
The Way The Future Was Lost In Space**

by Andrew Tate

This month I have chosen to review a book of a more lighter, fun and nostalgic nature which I picked up way back in 1999 while I was living in Vancouver. It is entitled The Way the Future Was Lost In Space: Pop Culture and Space Adventure with the Robinson Family by Mark Cotta Vaz (1998, Space Productions, Licensed by New Line Productions Inc., 152 pgs., s.c.). Being a *Lost in Space* fan as well as being fascinated with space exploration, science-fiction TV shows and fantasy, I just had to have this book. Also the cover caught my eye with its funky graphics.

The book covers more than just the 1960s campy TV series even though its main theme revolves around the creation of *Lost in Space* with interviews and profiles of the cast, the men and women behind the creation of the show; and, of course, the man who created the series - Irwin Allen - the showman of thrills and grandiose special and sometimes campy effects who produced such movie blockbusters as *The Poseidon Adventure* and the *Towering Inferno* and such T.V. hits as *The Time Tunnel* and *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea*. It basically covers the whole area of futurism, space exploration and technology, 1960s pop culture, computer art and even compares the imaginary 1997 of *Lost in Space* with the 1997 of yesteryear.

Let me briefly remind now remind you of how it all began. It was the year 1997 and the world was overpopulated. Enter the Robinson family (The Space Family Robinson) - John Robinson and his wife Maureen; their three children Will, Judy and Penny and the Robinson's co-pilot Major Don West. They are sent by U. S. Alpha Control in a spaceship called the Jupiter 2 to explore the possibly habitable worlds of Alpha Centauri.

However, unbeknown to them, Dr. Zachary Smith, "an agent of foreign powers" (comically played by actor Jonathan Harris) secretly sneaks aboard intending to sabotage the mission. However, the crew survives and is forced to land their crippled spaceship on a desolate, lifeless planet. Along with the Jupiter 2's talking robot simply called Robot, Dr. Smith (constantly under the watchful and scrupulous eye of co-pilot Major Don West) and the Robinsons must face many adventures and challenges as they travel through endless space searching for the way back home.

This is a fun, nostalgic, well-written book filled with illustrations and photographs of the 1960s space age pop culture as well as the *Lost in Space* cast, crew and scenes from the show. There is even a section on computer art which I found fascinating. If you love science-fiction T.V. shows and memorabilia, fantasy comics and space exploration as much as I do, read this book. Unfortunately it is not available in any branches of the GPL but I'm sure it can be found in used bookstores in the Greater Victoria area or you can order it from Amazon.com.

Until next time.



Andrew earned a B.A. in English, and is available to proofread, edit, and/or type and print out your essays. Email him at mrpianoman@shaw.ca for more information.

If Not Peace, at Least Sensible War

by Jim Erkiletian



Israelis shooting unarmed Arab youth attempting to regain control of their traditional lands may seem like some kind of déjà vu. It wasn't too long ago when it was Jews returning to their traditional home who were considered the trespassers.

Perhaps the Israelis and their American suppliers and military advisors should take a realistic look at history. Arabs have been fighting each other and invaders for over a thousand years. To think they haven't learned a thing or two about tactics and strategy is presumptuous in the extreme.

Some 900 years ago Mohammed, the prophet who founded Islam, died and left two branches of his religion under his two most charismatic sons. One, based in Baghdad, preached a slightly different interpretation of the Koran than the other, based in Tehran. It wasn't long before they came into physical conflict. Religious doctrine has spawned some of the most brutal actions humans have committed, from the torturers of the inquisition to the attempted genocide of entire populations. Thus each year armies would march into the deserts of Central Asia and do battle.

With the advent of the Crusades, the respective Emirs who recruited armies to meet the Christian invasions used the survivors of these encounters to build their own armies. Their ability to field seasoned battle-hardened troops against the invaders meant in practically every case they were victorious. And for some 800 years, a war in the desert between what was to become Iran and Iraq continued unabated.

In desert warfare it is difficult to maintain supply lines to forward troops. By the time they came upon an enemy squad, most of the army were engaged in supplying water, food and supplies to the front. Small groups of fighters tended to meet in barren country, and the style of warfare evolved to meet those conditions.

It soon became apparent to both sides that the "enemy" were not very different from themselves. It was also discovered that captured enemy soldiers could be easily reeducated as to the "true" interpretation of the Koran. It wasn't their fault, after all, that they'd come under the influence of heretics. And they were all, ultimately, Muslims.

After a hundred years or so, the goal on both sides became to capture rather than to kill.

Both in Bagdad and Tehran captured soldiers were placed in

schools where they were reeducated. A year or two later there would be a prisoner exchange, and the young men from each side would return home. Sometimes they returned with new wives, and whole families were connected. Some of those young men made contacts that led to trading relationships between the two city-states.

The tactics of capture served the Emirs well in their wars against the Crusaders. Christian captives could be ransomed back to their European subjects, which didn't hurt the Emir's bottom line.

The essential point for us today is that Arab warfare is based on capture rather than killing. Certainly people get killed and wounded in this highly competitive game. It ain't for sissies. But the objective is to treat your captives well and teach them the benefits of your culture so that they may "see the light." Eventually they may return to their own people with a more friendly attitude toward their enemies.

As the Koran notes, the best way to defeat your enemy is to make him your friend.

If nothing else, it's a far less costly form of warfare. Arab officers must look on in puzzled dismay as Israelis react to the capture of one of their sentries with air strikes and tank invasions. Eventually the Israeli guards are exchanged anyway. Why the big loss of life in between, much of it civilians who have no part in the conflict?

It's unfortunate the Israelis and their American advisers haven't recognized this difference. Arab tactics based on capture are almost certain to be more creative, and more decisive in the long run.

Perhaps it's not too late to shift to this much cheaper and more effective form of warfare, that is, to escalate down rather than up. The alternative has certainly proven to be ineffective and hasn't made any heroes. Only more war criminals.

Jim holds degrees in Economics, Education, English and Anthropology, and has work experience in six industries. He has written fiction, science, and newspaper articles, and nowadays he lives in Nanaimo and writes mainly as a poet and songwriter.

photos - right - People pray close to the Syrian-Israeli border fence near Majdal Shams in the Golan Heights June 5 2011, REUTERS/Nir Elias. Left - Israeli soldiers take aim next to the Syrian-Israeli border fence near Majdal Shams in the Golan Heights, June 5 2011, REUTERS/Ronen Zvulun.

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Site C Dam Update

Readers will be interested to hear that Hydro has submitted their "Description of Project" to the Environmental Assessment Office. Provided it is approved, the environmental assessment can begin. As of deadline, we have no news on the Federal Assessment. There will probably be a public hearing in Victoria, which will be advertised in the local media.

The treaty Eight First Nations are opposed to the dam, and their representative Chief Liz Logan spoke to a general assembly of the United Nations about this. She asked that James Auga, the U.N. "Rapporteur" on indigenous peoples affairs be asked to castigate the B.C. government for their plan to build the dam, and their way of implementing it. We hope he does, and that the government will cancel plans to build the dam.

Readers opposed to the dam are asked to keep alert, and be prepared to go to an assessment hearing at short notice.

Submitted by Don Startin.



Free University!

What is University 101?

University 101 is a program that offers FREE, non-credit, academic courses that will introduce students to a wide range of university topics. Non-credit means that you will get a completion certificate for attending the course, but the course cannot be applied to a degree or diploma program.

We try to support our students as much as possible, so meals are provided at the beginning of each class. Bus tickets and child care subsidies are also available.

What is the goal of University 101 and 102?

To provide introductory academic courses to people whose economic and social circumstances normally pose obstacles to university education.

Why do a course like University 101 or 102?

Because critical thinking and a passion for learning are elements of citizenship that can and should be shared amongst everyone. Humanities and Social Sciences give us ways to understand our own society and history.

What courses are offered?

University 101 is an introductory course in the Humanities. University 102 is an introductory course in the Social Sciences.

How do I apply?

Applications for the September 2011 University 101 (humanities) course will be available soon.

When do I apply?

Application Deadline for Sept 2011 University 101: August 15, 2011
Application Deadline for Jan 2012 University 101: November 15, '11

What if I have more questions?

For more information visit web.uvic.ca/uni101.

Saanich Inlet, Industrial Capital of Vancouver Island?

Did anyone notice a recent flurry of activities within the Cowichan Valley Regional District especially with respect to southern electoral areas Mill Bay/Malahat, Shawnigan Lake and Cobble Hill?

An Official Community Plan (OCP) under the name of "South Cowichan OCP" is nearly ready to be adopted, Bamberton proposal from Three Point Properties (TPP); YES -- You did hear it right the first time; is back on the table, re-cycling facility (ECO-Depot) project is on full steam, Grant-in-Aid coffers are being emptied to benefit special groups and a new set of Alternate Approval Process (APP) launched to increase our taxes.

Public is lured into thinking that this Bamberton proposal has been removed from the table, but recent activities indicate the contrary. The Advisory Planning Commission in Mill Bay/Malahat as of Tuesday, May 10, 2011 has recommended the commercial and industrial expansion of our forestry lands without any regard to environmental impacts! And, the said recommendation was primarily derived from references to content in the new "South Cowichan OCP" and expedited processing.

Decisions for the future are being made this day based on the yet to be adopted official community plan. All this with the blessing of three southern electoral area directors and the BC "Liberal" Government provincial ministry (Let us not forget the recent Ministerial Exemption obtained by Gerry Giles).

It took more than five (5) years in the making of the so called "South Cowichan OCP" and the public was given two (2) weeks to respond to an arduous survey?

Is proper zoning in place to establish this re-cycling facility (ECO-Depot) at Cameron-Taggart?

Currently zoned Forestry, on the shores of Saanich Inlet, are beautiful, fragile, eco-sensitive Bamberton Lands; which could be destined for parks and developed as a tourist destination center. However, our visionary leaders see them as the heartland of industrial activities. Maybe, at the top of the Malahat, it will be in our best interest to set up a huge sign saying, "Welcome to the Industrial Capital of Vancouver Island"?

Or, perhaps maybe, all the Citizens unite and flatly refuse these outrageous proposals from this set of Directors.

Balu Tatachari is Chair of the Friends of Saanich Inlet, Mill Bay. For more info visit friendsofsaanichinlet.org. Info also available at [www.saynotodump.ca](http://saynotodump.ca) and ecodepotfacts.ca.

Roll Back the HST, Redesign the Eco-Fees

With the HST referendum just around the corner we need to look at the eco-fee program as well.

Eco or recycling fees were supposed to cover the cost of safe disposal of hazardous materials and divert recyclables from the landfills, a commendable goal. But Eco-fees are being charged on items like drink containers that already carry recycling deposits, and the HST is imposed on top of that. Such inconsistencies have led to much confusion and opened the door to a flood of abuses. For example, one local retailer consistently neglects to refund the eco-fee on returned items. Others roll the eco-fee into the product price enabling them to pocket the money. Minister Falcon's department seems unable or unwilling to explain the rules governing the program. As it stands there is no way to ascertain that these fees are being used for recycling.

When I buy a 2 litre container of juice, I pay a \$.20 deposit and a \$.06 eco-fee. When I return the container to Encorp Inc., I get my refund back and the cycle is complete. But wait, I've been charged a \$.06 eco-fee for container recycling, and I just hauled my empties to the depot. Companies like Encorp were in business years before eco-fees were introduced, reselling glass and plastic to remanufacturing plants and presumably making a profit. Are we now to believe that they need our help to stay in business? Are we subsidizing the recycling industry? It will take some forensic accounting investigation to unravel the money trail. Encorp Inc. is a publicly traded company, so there may be some clues in their quarterly reports.

But wait, there's more! There's HST on top of the eco-fee: .12 times \$.06 = \$.0072; rounded up to a penny of course. So I've paid an extra \$.07 which went into someone's pocket, not for recycling. Of course Revenue B.C. denies they get a single penny of drink container eco-fees, and they say it's not a tax.

Ontario introduced a similar program last July 1. The ensuing backlash forced them to cancel it last July 20 after Ontario Ombudsman Andre Marin announced his opinion that the practice constituted a tax on a tax and was grossly flawed and unfair.¹

If eco-fees were replaced with refundable deposits where possible, such as on fluorescent lights, there would be an incentive for proper disposal. The amount of packaging has to be minimized for all goods. For items where a deposit system is not practical, like tires, electronics and other toxic and hazardous goods, keep an eco-fee in place, ensure the funds are used properly, and provide a pick-up service for these goods. After all, if we pay a recycling fee, are we then expected to drive or carry these items to a recycling place ourselves? The steps of the legislature might be a good place.

Julius Treigys, Victoria

¹ www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/story/2011/03/28/ontario-eco-fees.html



And Then There Was Willa

As a young lad just coming of age in the 1980s, Victoria, like most cities, was filled with these incredible older ladies (some of whom breathed fire). Many were adorned with flamboyant flora dora hats and frilly dresses and beehive hairdos that towered over their precious little heads. Some of the "old dolls" literally looked like throwbacks from a different era, and they were too.

And some of the devout and contrite church ladies like Audrey and Shirley Rose were something else. Women of the faith who had definitely practiced what they preached. And then there was ... Willa. Willa was like no one I've met before or since. And since our first meeting, she is forever etched in my memory.

I was hitchhiking, and an older blue car stopped 60 feet ahead. A mysterious woman, with gentle features, honked the horn and with a light gentle voice invited me in. She had informed me she did not normally pick up hitchhikers but sensed I had something on my mind and had a need. She was right, and a friendship that spanned 30 years was formed. No matter how serious the predicament or problem, Willa was always there in her car with her cheery spirit, love, and support. And that was the same interaction she had with many other people and friends. No questions asked, Willa was always there. A church lady who really lived the gospel with her unfailing love and generosity.

And there were countless people she had helped, expecting nothing in return.

A friend who could make a coffee social a special event. And Willa loved her sunsets and teddy bears. Unfortunately, the sun set rather suddenly on Willa. She is surely missed by anyone who had the pleasure of meeting and knowing her. We all miss and love you Willa!

© Mark Idczak

state of disgrace

struggling for legal tender
i consider crime
staring in empty pocket mirror
knowing my desperation reek
will get the dogs on to me
before i get close to the big score.
so, it's off
to the social stigma cesspool
to beg for help
from the stone faces, unaffected
by the masses
that are there
hours before me.
i try to hide
deep in my collar
up in my pocket book
plug my ears with my elbows
against the screaming
of shitty arsed toddlers
and their shrieking mothers
gag back the puke
of the diaper aroma over
the armpit baklava.
there's a scuffle to my left
over place in an invisible line
and a woman in tears
after three attempts
at two different intake offices.
she's out of diapers and formula
and i'm out of time
and tolerance.
i knew the system pissed down the backs of the poor.
but i'd never stood so close
to the drain.

© j fisher

Smart Meters Are Stupid

BC Hydro's plan to spend at least \$1 billion to replace our current electricity meters is making people angry and they are questioning why the rush, and why no debate. John Horgan, MLA, Energy Health Critic, and Sue Hammel, MLA, are presenting petitions with hundreds of signatures to the Legislative Assembly demanding a halt to the "Smartmetering and Infrastructure" program, before the session ends on Thursday June 2nd. The purpose is to bring to the attention of government and the public the many deficiencies in the plan as presented. Organizers stress that these meters are not "green" as originally claimed, nor do they save any energy, or money for customers and the province, while in fact the reverse is true in that they waste energy - and our money - in order to function.

photo: Christina Nikolic. Audio from rally available at www.pacificfreepress.com/gorilla-radio.html



Legislated Poverty Dance

Fetid air seeps into my SRO sleeping room
only view is not feminist zine or forster novel,
but corrugated tin of rotten hovel next door;
my soul has has enough material poverty,
somehow surreal mystic clicks ON ON ON

i'm captain of a river barge on the Seine, France
1935 - we haul silks & pearly soft satins trance
this river breeze is as expansive as perfume
inside vessel is dank & dumasNovel dark
bats nestle on ceiling, they batTalks to Us!

reciting baudelaire, marx brothers movie lines,
good-natured souls, the motley crew like them!
Evenings i play accordion-sweet symphonies
to the happiest ghosts on the ruddy river bank,
they bark and laugh right sartre bone back,
as we gently glibly glide along the seine.

THEN i am sudden jolted awake, back in sad
rainforest kanada soul-cold west coast hole,
far far away from bats accordions romance,
in this government-legislated material poverty

DANCE!

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Co-ordinator's Contribution	198.42	13.39	92.39
Subscriptions	70.00	300.00	35.00
Direct Donations to Coordinator	50.00	50.00	50.00
Bread & Roses Donation to SNZ	800.00	800.00	800.00
Total Street Newz Revenue	1808.92	1583.89	1763.61
Street Newz Expenses			
Salaries	800.00	800.00	800.00
Paper & Printing Costs	483.84	358.40	358.40
Office expenses/website	0.00	18.00	0.00
Postage	55.08	57.49	60.21
Ttl Street Newz Expenses	1378.92	1233.89	1218.61
Street Newz	430.00	350.00	545.00
Bread & Roses Revenue			
Grants	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Bread & Roses Revenue	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bread & Roses Expenses			
Street Newz Donation	800.00	800.00	800.00
Ttl Bread & Roses Expenses	800.00	800.00	800.00
Bread & Roses	-800.00	-800.00	-800.00
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